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MOP

Church and Community Organizing

October 18, 2007

Dear Rep Clemente:

Thank you for scheduling a hearing on HR 176, to repeal the REAL ID Act and return to a negotiated rulemaking process with the state.

The Michigan Organizing Project represents 7 inter-denominational churches and two organizations of homeless people in Southwest MI. In July over 300 people, immigrant and native born alike, stood together to oppose REAL ID and support efforts in the Michigan Legislature to back repeal.

At our meeting in July, people from all walks of life testified against REAL ID. Homeless people told of the problems they are having getting an ID or Drivers License under current law, and many said they would be totally unable to obtain these vital documents under the REAL ID system, even though they are native-born citizens. Others who are naturalized citizens told of the impossibility of getting the kinds of documents required from their countries of origin. There was also a great deal of fear expressed regarding the privacy threats and identity theft possibilities posed by this radical law. In addition, many business owners have told us that many of their employees would be unable to drive to their jobs if these new requirements for a drivers license are implemented.

National security has to be a concern of everyone. But that is a function of the Federal Government, and should not be passed on to the states. We are also concerned about the enormous cost of REAL ID to state government. In our current fiscal environment these costs will either result in cuts in other essential state services, or huge increases in the fees charged for a license of ID.

Please do everything you can to stop this radical new law from ever being implemented.

Sincerely,

John Musick
John Musick
Executive Director
Michigan Organizing Project